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On other pages

40,000 Refugees Resettled by the	Visit	5
World Council Last Year 2	Death of Archbishop Stephan of Sofia . .	5
Church Delegation Reports on China	In Brief	6

UNITED KINGDOM

Bishop of Chichester to Resign

The Bishop of Chichester, Dr. G.K.A. Bell, who is honorary president of the World Council of Churches, has announced his intention of resigning as Bishop of Chichester at the end of 1957.

Announcing his decision to his diocesan council, the Bishop said he would be 75 in February 1958 and believed he should make way for a younger man. He said he wished his successor to be appointed in time to attend next year's Lambeth Conference of Anglican bishops from all over the world.

The bishop has held office in Chichester for 29 years. He is the senior English bishop by date of consecration and had previously been Dean of Canterbury, where he became well-known as a friend of the arts and commissioned plays for performances in his cathedral, including T.S. Eliot's "Murder in the Cathedral".

During the war he was active in following up contacts with German church leaders who opposed nazism (see EPS No 20) and was an outspoken critic of "obliteration bombing" and the policy of "unconditional surrender".

Since 1919, when he was secretary to the late Archbishop Randall Davidson of Canterbury, Dr. Bell has been a leader in the ecumenical movement. He was elected honorary president of the WCC, after chairing its Central Committee between 1948 and 1954. He said he would continue to serve the World Council to the best of his abilities and "work for the cause of Christian unity and fellowship and for world peace".

E.P.S., Geneva

PUERTO RICO

Caribbean Christian Leaders Confer

(San German) - A plan to hold another consultation of Caribbean Christian leaders was one of the recommendations adopted at the closing session of a recent area-wide interdenominational meeting. Fifty-one delegates from sixteen countries of the Caribbean and neighbouring countries attended the meeting May 17-24 on the campus of the Inter-American University, San German, Puerto Rico (see EPS No. 17).

Sponsored by the International Missionary Council in cooperation with the World Council of Christian Education, the meeting stressed fellowship and exchange of information and materials among the Protestant churches at work in the area.

Techniques of mass evangelism and the role of evangelism in the daily life of the church were highlighted in discussions at the meeting. The consultation recognised the value of union theological seminaries in the area. Countries which had such interdenominational educational institutions were found to be well ahead in theological education.

Discussion on religious education centered around curriculum materials. Countries which were Spanish-speaking had adequate materials as a result of earlier efforts made by the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, Division of Foreign Missions, National Council of Churches, USA. The English-speaking countries in the area used materials from many different sources, none particularly suited to the region.

Christian home and family life was discovered a relatively "neglected area" where much more intensive work must be done. The consultation followed the pattern of presentation of preliminary papers and group discussion. It was not "an authoritative, administrative" body, but a group of religious leaders in the area meeting together for the first time to discover common interests and goals, according to Dr. J.W. Decker of the International Missionary Council.

Associated with Dr. Decker in the planning of the conference were the late E.J. Bingle (see EPS No. 22), editor of the International Review of Missions, and the Rev. Russell F. Harrison of the World Council of Christian Education. Bible study was led by the Rev. Philip Potter, World Council of Churches' youth secretary who was born in the Caribbean area.

Denominations represented were the Methodist, Presbyterian, Disciples of Christ, Anglican, Moravian, Churches of God, Lutheran, United Church of Canada, Dominican Evangelical Baptist, and Evangelical Church of Puerto Rico. Five Christian councils in the area were also represented. E.P.S., Geneva

40,000 Refugees Resettled by the World Council Last Year

"This year we have the most thrilling report in history to make to you in the point of numbers - 40,000 refugees were resettled between April, 1956, and May, 1957, by the World Council of Churches," Dr. Edgar H.S. Chandler, director of the Service to Refugees of the WCC, said on June 3, speaking to 150 churchmen from 35 nations attending the Annual Consultation of the Council's Division of Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees. The consultation met at Eastbourne, England, from May 31 to June 5.

"But having said that," Dr. Chandler continued, "I must tell you that our caseload is still about 150,000, just as it was when I reported to you a year ago. We must recognise that the problem of uprooted peoples is the greatest single problem of our time."

The fact that 40,000 persons were resettled does not mean much, Dr. Chandler said, if "we do not see individuals and families behind the figure and if we do not visualise the churches in various countries who have made it possible for these people to come. This is a thrilling witness of inter-church relationships - this working together to bring about the miracle of a new life."

Reviewing the work of the past year, representatives of the world-wide refugee service field staff reported to the consultation, pointing up problems, describing successes and making pleas for aid for "those who can only look to the churches for help".

"If the interest of the world had been held for another few weeks, then we could have liquidated the whole problem of the Hungarian refugees in Austria," Mr. Arthur Foster, WCC field officer in Austria, said. "But it dried up."

The most pressing problem now is unaccompanied boys and girls - 3,800 of them, he reported. "We can't under any circumstances leave these youths in their present environment."

For the last few weeks the WCC has been the only agency working along the Austrian-Hungarian border, Mr. Foster said, "where at one point there were 68 groups. The glamour has gone and the money has mostly gone. But the refugees still are coming across - not many, but some. They come because to stay would mean extinction."

Reporting on the current situation in Yugoslavia, Mr. Jan Van Hoogstaten said that 13,500 refugees remain in 25 camps. He is a member of the Church World Service staff, on loan to the WCC for work in Yugoslavia. About 2,300 Hungarians have returned home, he said, another 3,000 have migrated, mostly to European countries, and 560 have decided to remain in Yugoslavia.

Consultation Commends Projects for Inter-Church Aid Support

Inter-church aid projects around the world were commended to the member churches of the World Council of Churches on June 5 at the final sessions.

The decisions on the various projects came after small discussion groups had studied lists of projects submitted by national councils of churches and inter-church aid committees.


Typical among many widely differing projects are: one seeking support for theological training for pastors and laymen in Spain; another in Vienna is to build a kindergarten in an industrial district for Protestant children. For Orthodox groups one of the aims is to rebuild five churches destroyed by earthquakes in Greece.

In East Pakistan, support is requested for a Fishermen's Cooperative Society at Gobindasri. In Hong Kong one of the projects is to start reading classes for children; in South Vietnam to construct a hospital in Saigon.

Dr. Leslie E. Cooke, director of the Division, pointed out that the Division can only commend the projects to the churches as worthy of support. "Our role is wholly that of drawing the attention of the churches to them and commending them for support. The Division has no treasury from which it can make direct grants to meet these needs. But we are confident that this programme provides an opportunity for ecumenical service which will make not only for the renewal of the church, but also for the strengthening of its witness to the Gospel through a ministry to human need."

The consultation brought together more than 150 clergymen and laymen from churches in 35 nations.

In closing the consultation, Dr. W.A. Visser 't Hooft, general secretary of the World Council of Churches, reminded the delegates that to be effective, "inter-church aid must be simply a reflection of the self-giving of Christ".



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These are some of the statements that were made during the six-day consultation:

"Let us salute and recognise the one million Arab refugees as men, women and children and extend more help to them because they also are created in the image of God." - Mr. Labib Nasir, general secretary of the YMCA in Jordan.

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"The most pathetic people in Israel are the Hebrew Christians who often suffer economic persecution and are often shunned by their families. They have been taken out of their own community and they are in a no man's land because often they are the victims of sects who have not brought them into the community of the church. Many people coming to Israel are hungering for a feeling of community. They are open to receive the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is in such a situation that you see the sin of Christian disunity. Cranks and sects-galore have turned Israel into a labyrinth for the Jew who would see Jesus." - The Rev. Gardiner Scott, minister of the Church of Scotland in Jerusalem and chairman of the National Christian Council of Israel.

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"We do not want to live on the charity of Great Britain or the United States. We ask church-to-church help so we can say to our people, 'Christians of the world have helped you so you can go forward to show the way to the country'. Our new nations have their freedom, but we need constructive work now, not fighting. The Church of Christ must lead the way." - Bishop Chandu Ray, Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon.

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"The problems are so great that the piecemeal work we do on a denominational basis is increasingly inadequate. We must have a programme that does not go into the pigeon holes on the desks of the mission boards, but into the hearts of the average church member. John Doe in Tulsa, Oklahoma, must be as aware of these larger needs as he is now of the needs of his own denomination." - Dr. Virgil Sly, chairman of Division of World Mission, United Christian Missionary Society, Disciples of Christ.

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"The Church in East Asia has many needs and it is asking for the fulfilment of these needs on the basis of partnership and not merely as a receiver. The church in Pakistan is helping Indian refugees, the Indian church is assisting Pakistan refugees, Korea is sending missionaries to Thailand, the church in the Philippines is sending missionaries to Indonesia, Burma is planning to send missionaries to Thailand and is aiding flood victims in India, Indonesia is sending gifts to Hungarian refugees." - The Rev. G.P. Charles, secretary of the Burma Christian Council.

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"Inter-church aid is the cutting edge of the ecumenical development in Indonesia. Poverty has driven the Christians closer together and this makes deeper thinking and a reconsideration of the nature of the church necessary and urgent as never before." - Dr. Peter Latuihamallo, head of the Theological School, Jakarta, Indonesia.

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"As we develop the programme of inter-church aid we must aim to develop such a fellowship of mutual service in the churches that the distinctions 'giving churches' and 'receiving churches', 'western churches' and 'eastern churches' cease to have meaning. As we give ourselves to this ministry to human need, while the nature of service will change with changing situations, we can expect no respite nor look forward to any discharge from it." - Dr. Leslie E. Cooke, director of the WCC's Division of Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees. E.P.S., Geneva

JAPANChurch Delegation Reports on China Visit

A party of fifteen Christians from Japan has reported in Tokyo on a month's visit to the churches in the Chinese People's Republic.

The Rev. Junichi Asano, head of the delegation, said the object of the trip had been to restore relationships between the churches of the two countries and "share responsibility for Asian evangelism and world peace".

Mr. Asano said the Executive Committee of the "Three Self-Movement" in the Chinese churches under Dr. Y.T. Wu, had asked "that Japanese and Chinese Christians should be united in brotherhood" and endorsed "Japan's drive against hydrogen and atomic bombs".

Expressing reservations about the relationship of the Chinese churches with their government, Mr. Asano said he doubted whether the churches were financially independent. He expressed fear that the principle of separation of church and state was in danger in China and said he noticed "a complete lack of any gratitude" on the part of Chinese Christians for the help they had received from mission boards in the past.

Among signs of improved status for the Chinese people, the delegation's leader referred to improvements in the position of women, and especially the appointment of Madame Wu Ling Pang as a provincial governor.

In a reference to the "Three Self-Movement" (for self-government, self-support and self-propagation) in the Chinese churches, Mr. Asano said, "we must help each other to bring about real self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating Christian movements in both countries". E.P.S., Geneva

BULGARIADeath of Archbishop Stephan of Sofia

Stephan, the former Archbishop of Sofia and Exarch of Bulgaria, has died at the age of 79 in a monastery in Bulgaria, where he had been living in internment since 1949. Archbishop Stephan was consecrated as a bishop in 1920. As Archbishop of Sofia he attended many church congresses abroad between the two world wars. On January 23, 1945, he was elected Exarch and head of the Bulgarian Church. He then resumed relations with the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, from which his church had separated in 1872. In the summer of 1948 Archbishop Stephan was dismissed from his office. E.P.S., Geneva

AUSTRIAProtestant Church Grows

According to a report received from Bishop Gerhard May of Vienna, the number of Protestants in Austria has increased since 1945 from 330,000 to 420,000. Twenty-three new Protestant congregations have been formed during the same period. Bishop May ascribed this increase in number mainly to conversions from Roman Catholicism.

Since the time of National Socialism, relationships with the Roman Catholic Church have undergone "a fundamental change", says Bishop May. For the first time in the history of the Austrian church, the two confessions have cooperated in the pastoral care of soldiers and refugees. The great aim of the Protestant Church, he declared, was to obtain legal equality with the Roman Catholic Church. The financial position of the Protestant Church of Austria was even worse than that of the churches in East Germany. The Protestant Church does not receive state subsidies and has no access to taxation returns. Protestant pastors receive only 60% of the salary of a secondary school teacher. E.P.S., Geneva

In Brief

Dr. Henry Cook of London, European secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, has been to Poland (see EPS No. 22), the Eastern sector of Berlin and Yugoslavia to visit Baptist churches. In Yugoslavia he conferred with vice-president Rodoljub Colakovic and officials of the state commission for religious affairs.

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The Presbyterian Church in the USA at its 169th General Assembly decided to establish a Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations to replace the Church's Board of Foreign Missions and its permanent commission on inter-church relations.

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Professor Paul Ricoeur, professor of Metaphysics at the Sorbonne in Paris, delivered the annual lecture of the John Knox House, Geneva, Switzerland, on June 13. Taking as theme "State and Violence", he described the bearing upon Christian duty of extreme ethical dilemmas involving choices between loyalty to the state and loyalty to the Sermon on the Mount. The John Knox House is an ecumenical student centre of the Presbyterian Church USA.

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Owing to extraordinary demand the Hungarian Protestant paper "Reformatusk Lapja" will increase its circulation this autumn. Its present circulation is 17,000 copies. Four thousand letters of thanks have been received from readers following appearance of the first eight numbers since March. Back numbers are out of print.

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Dr. Schmutzler, Protestant student chaplain at Leipzig University, who was arrested two months ago (see EPS No. 15/16), has not been allowed any visitors in prison. When arrested Pastor Schmutzler had just recovered from a serious illness. The authorities of the German Democratic Republic have not yet announced detailed charges or a date for his trial.

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Roman Catholic sources report that since 1940 the number of Protestants in Chile has increased from 119,000 to 241,000. The total population of Chile is about six million.

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The Moscow Patriarchate of the Orthodox Church of Russia has restored the Walaama monastery (which is in Finnish territory) to the Finnish Orthodox Church.

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Heinz Kloppenburg, Oberkirchenrat of Dortmund, has received an honorary degree as Doctor of Theology from Eden Theological Seminary (Webster Groves, Missouri, USA), in recognition of meritorious service to the Church, especially in the ecumenical field.

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Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches, the Jewish community, the Youth Circle of Lower Saxony and many other associations have protested against the desecration of Jewish graves in Salzgitter-Lebenstedt. The protest was made in front of the Marktkirche in Hanover. Bishop Hanns Lilje, addressing the demonstrators, stressed the need for respect for human dignity and for the religious beliefs of others, irrespective of their faith, race or political views.

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In his call to prayer for the month of June Pope Pius XII appeals to all believing Catholics to pray for Scandinavia's return to the Roman Catholic Church. Roman Catholics in Scandinavia are at present a tiny minority.

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Young German Evangelicals in Western Germany have been urged to spend their holidays more frequently in the East German Democratic Republic as the guests of church youth groups.

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Pupils of secondary schools in the German Democratic Republik are to be denied permission to visit Western Germany. The Council of the Evangelical Church of the Union (EKU) has predicted that this measure will deepen the division between East and West Germany. The Council declared at its Berlin meeting that the prohibition of travel obstructed the efforts of the Church to build a bridge between Protestants in East and West Germany.

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The American Lutheran, Evangelical Lutheran and United Evangelical Lutheran Churches in the United States have selected Minneapolis as the city for the constituting convention of the new American Lutheran Church when they unite in May, 1960 (see EPS No. 1).

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The United Church of Japan (Kyodan) has established a research institute to conduct continuing inquiry into the mission of the church. Subjects of study include Faith and Order questions, problems of church and society associated with rapid social change in Japan, race problems, communism and ecumenicity. Contacts will be kept with the Division of Studies of the World Council of Churches.

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The Disciples' Peace Fellowship, a group working for world peace within the Disciples of Christ (Christian churches) in the United States, has launched a "peace budget" to encourage voluntary self-taxation over and above normal state taxes. The proceeds will go to US foreign economic aid and other projects in reconciliation.

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Funds allocated by the Inter-Church Aid Division of the World Council of Churches have enabled the Orthodox Church of Finland to publish its own church newspaper, "Ortodoksia".

E.P.S., Geneva

Correction: EPS No. 19, page 7:

The British Quaker and co-founder of the Fellowship of Reconciliation was Henry Hodgkin, not George Lansbury.

